



Ripples from the Yellowstone River

Montana 63rd Session—January 2013 Update

Common Sense Conservation on the Yellowstone

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Working Relationships Yield a Shared Vision

The Yellowstone River Conservation District Council (YRDCDC or Council) is comprised of representatives from ten conservation districts bordering the main stem of the Yellowstone River and the Chair of the YRDCDC's Resource Advisory Committee (RAC). Its **purpose is to provide local leadership, assistance, and guidance for the wise use and conservation** of the river's natural resources to sustain and improve social, environmental, and economic values.

CES HEALTH ASSESSMENT



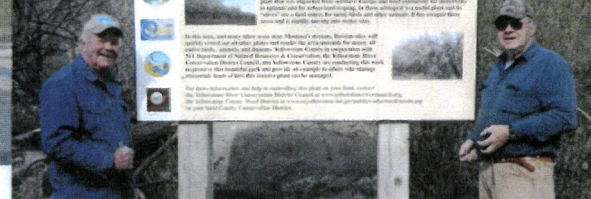
The Yellowstone River Cumulative Effects Study (CES) is unprecedented in terms of the **grassroots watershed approach** to river management. The study, authorized by the US Congress in the **Water Resources Development Act**, is a comprehensive investigation of the river from Gardiner, Montana, to its confluence with the Missouri. It was designed to determine the **hydrologic, biological, and socioeconomic cumulative impacts or health of the river**. Critical funding will help complete what has now become a thirteen-year effort, allowing the state of Montana to protect its own **3.3 million dollar** investment and leverage additional millions of dollars of contribution by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as well as other federal agencies and nonprofit organizations.

EXHIBIT

DATE

HB

RUSSIAN OLIVE TREE REMOVAL PROJECT



INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive plants like Russian olive and saltcedar are choking out native species and endangering the health of the Yellowstone River. With the help of our partners, including the Montana DNRC, we have:

- ☑ **Reached out to more than 33,000 residents** of the Yellowstone River corridor about the threat of Russian olive and saltcedar.
- ☑ **Demonstrated** cost effective management techniques and **removed more than 50 acres of Russian olive** from riparian areas.
- ☑ **Sponsored tours and workshops** in Yellowstone National Park and six Montana counties **targeted toward farmers, ranchers, private landowners and community leaders**.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



The CES has already proven its worth in protecting public health and safety during Exxon's oil spill on the river in 2011. An early part of cumulative effects analysis, the development of a predicted **channel migration zone or CMZ**, was used in a BMP to help understand the complexities of making decisions about resource uses in proximity to the Yellowstone River's channel flows. **Funding will assure that the Best Management Practices (BMP) can be applied to future emergencies** and it will be a major tool by which the state continues to showcase the Yellowstone's importance to visitors from across Montana, the United States and the world.